

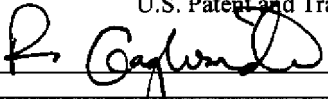
**P A T E N T**

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Applicant: GENE DIPOTO	Confirmation No.: 1092
Serial No.: 10/693,815	Examiner: ANURADHA RAMANA
Filing Date: OCTOBER 24, 2003	Group Art Unit: 3733
Docket No.: 1291.1143101	Customer No.: 28075
Title: METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR STABILIZING THE SPINE THROUGH AN ACCESS DEVICE	

**AMENDMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH 37 CFR §1.116 AF**  
**RESPONSE AFTER FINAL**

MAIL STOP: AF  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

<b>CERTIFICATE FOR ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION:</b>	
The undersigned hereby certifies that this paper or papers, as described herein, are being electronically transmitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on this <u>9th</u> day of <u>September</u> , 2008.	
By 	Name: Rachel Gagliardi

Dear Sir:

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action of the Examiner mailed July 8, 2008, with a shortened statutory period set to expire on October 8, 2008.

Please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0413.

Please amend the above-identified patent application as follows:

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims, which begins on page 2 of this paper.

**Amendments to the Drawings** begin on page 9 of this paper and include attached replacement sheets.

**Remarks/Arguments** begin on page 10 of this paper.

An **Appendix** including amended drawing figures is attached following page 14 of this paper.